

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger,
Chairman, WSAG
Deputy Secretary of State, Kenneth Rush
Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern
and South Asian Affairs, Joseph Sisco
Ambassador Robert McCloskey
Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger
Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Clements
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral
Thomas H. Moorer
Director, Central Intelligence, William Colby
Assistant to the President for Energy, Governor
John Love
Consultant to the President for Energy, Charles
DiBonna
Assistant to the President, General Alexander
M. Haig, Jr.
Deputy Assistant to the President for National
Security Affairs, Major General Brent Scowcroft
Commander Jonathan T. Howe, NSC Staff

DATE AND TIME:

Sunday, October 14, 1973
Approximately 9:16-11:00 a.m.

PLACE:

The Situation Room
The White House

SUBJECT:

WSAG Meeting - Middle East

The meeting was called at the last minute on Sunday morning.

Dr. Kissinger: Let us begin with a briefing on the situation. We will then discuss the oil business, and will turn to other aspects after that.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/2

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

2

Director Colby: [Read prepared briefing which was similar to the 6:30 a.m. CIA situation report attached at Tab A.] Director Colby stated that action was picking up on the Egyptian front. There was more air action around the Canal area, and Egypt appeared to be more willing to commit its air force. It appeared that the Egyptians had begun a general offensive in the Sinai, and that some units might have reached the Mitla Pass. ✓ 2

Dr. Kissinger: I think both sides are lying like Arabs now.

Secretary Sisco: At least one is.

Dr. Kissinger: How far in is the Mitla Pass?

Secretary Sisco: It is about thirty to thirty-five kilometers. I was on it last year. It is really just a foothill but in sharp contrast with the very flat land around it. It runs vertical to the Canal itself.

[Director Colby then explained that on the Syrian front [redacted] the Israelis were about 22 miles from Damascus. The Israelis had, however, really moved only a few miles beyond their previous positions. The slowness might indicate a change in the direction of the Israeli advance. It appeared that they might be trying to envelop forces in the Golan Heights area by turning to the South. This move could take the Israelis into the path of the Jordanians who are about 12 kilometers inside the border and east of Da'ra. [redacted] 1

Director Colby then noted that the Soviet force posture had not changed but that the airlift continued at a high level. There had been some 200 flights to date, including one IL-76.]

Dr. Kissinger: What is an IL-76?

Director Colby: It is a new airplane which can carry 44 tons of people or cargo.

Admiral Moorer: It is a very big aircraft. They displayed it at the Paris Air Show.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/3

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

3

Director Colby: We don't know what it is carrying. We have noted that tanks are being loaded on cargo ships, but we have no confirmation of reports that Russian ships are unloading tanks at Tartus and Latikia in Syria.

Dr. Kissinger: Tom, can you give us an assessment of the military situation?

Admiral Moorer: It seems clear to me that the slowdown in Israeli air action was due to the need for crew rest and maintenance. Yesterday they had 300 sorties, 150 over Syria, and 150 over the Sinai. So their air activity appears to be picking up again.

Dr. Kissinger: They are just like the Americans, with an equal division of sorties.

Admiral Moorer: Is that so. I don't think the Jordanians will be a factor. They will make a gesture but not commit their forces.

Dr. Kissinger: That is more or less what they have told us.

Admiral Moorer: The Egyptians seem to be moving south in the Sinai, but their primary objective is to hold the western part of the Sinai. They are not ambitious to go all the way across. The Israelis should be able to withstand the Egyptian probes.

Dr. Kissinger: What is the Egyptians strategic objective to the south?

Director Colby: There are oil wells further along the Suez.

Admiral Moorer: They may be trying to take Sharm el-Sheikh.

Dr. Kissinger: But for that much of the Sinai?

Admiral Moorer: They knocked off an Israeli radar at Sharm el-Sheikh. If the Israelis grind it out at the rate they are going, they will make slow progress in the north. Whether they have enough strength to push the Egyptians back into the Sinai is doubtful.

Secretary Sisco: Can they continue to hold?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/4

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

4

Admiral Moorer: Yes. As the Egyptians move farther to the East, they will become more vulnerable. The missiles limit it. It is difficult to maintain themselves.

Dr. Kissinger: Outside the SAM belt.

Secretary Rush: Aren't they moving it with them?

Admiral Moorer: It would take a long time.

Secretary Sisco: If the Israelis decide they have done enough in Syria, where do you think they will dig in, given their resources? Where will they establish a holding posture?

Admiral Moorer: They will hold a position where they can shell Damascus.

Dr. Kissinger: That's where they are.

Director Colby: But the forces they have bypassed are substantial.

Dr. Kissinger: But from their closest point they can shell Damascus.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have evidence that Syrian troop morale has become low. According to French and British correspondents they have abandoned substantial quantities of equipment.

Admiral Moorer: The question is whether the Israelis will have enough strength to push across the Canal. I think they can hold and contain the Egyptians, but not push them back.

Secretary Sisco: That is a very crucial judgment.

Admiral Moorer: Once the Egyptians are out in the open, on the sand, it will be very hard for them to defend themselves.

Dr. Kissinger: Even if they move SAMs with them?

Admiral Moorer: They have to protect their lines as well as their forces. As the space grows larger their problem becomes greater.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 17 2/5

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

5

Secretary Rush: Because of Israeli air superiority.

Admiral Moorer: The Israelis shot at some Soviet aeroflot planes at Aleppo.

Secretary Schlesinger: How many Soviet personnel were taken out in the airlift?

Director Colby: Before the war we believe there were 200 Soviets in Egypt, and about 1,400 in Syria. A goodly part of those in Egypt have now left, and certainly some of those in Syria.

Dr. Kissinger: A week ago we were asking the question whether the Egyptians could hold. Now we are asking if the Israelis can hold. I'm not blaming anyone mind you.

Admiral Moorer: We underestimated the Syrians as well as the Egyptians.

Director Colby: The basic assumption applies on both sides.

Dr. Kissinger: That explains why it took longer to defeat both. That was only a matter of timing. Now the judgment is being made that the Israelis can't push the Egyptians back.

Secretary Schlesinger: That is probably a little premature.

Director Colby: It will be a longer fight. They might or might not be able to push them back.

Secretary Rush: What about casualties?

Admiral Moorer: That's what I'm talking about.

Director Colby: When the Israelis turn toward the Sinai they will be able to apply considerable pressure. Whether they can push the Egyptians back, I don't know.

Admiral Moorer: They have already lost 478 as prisoners and an even larger number have been killed. It is an attrition war. They have lost more up here (pointing to Syria). It is a question of staying power.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/6

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

6

Dr. Kissinger: How long would it take them to shift, three to four days? They will have to fight in Syria for two or three more days so they will not be in the Sinai before next week.

Secretary Schlesinger: We thought they would be there on Wednesday and now it is Sunday. 3

Admiral Moorer: And now the Israelis are weaker.

Dr. Kissinger: On Saturday we thought it would be Tuesday. On Monday, Wednesday was predicted and on Thursday it was to be by Friday. It has not been a series of victories followed by a knockout.

What do we do if the oil is cut off? What kinds of problems will we have?

[Governor Love distributed a draft contingency paper on the oil problem.](Tab B) 4

Governor Love: There are a number of ways to cut off the supply. First of all, we have to consider direct imports and then indirect imports.

Dr. Kissinger: What assumptions are you making when you talk about a total cutoff?

Governor Love: We are not talking about Iranian oil, but we are assuming the rest of the Persian Gulf states, Libya and Algeria join in the cutoff. (Reading from paper), we figure a 100,000 barrels a day indirect with an anticipated growth all the way up to 500,000. Over a six-month period we might be able to save the following amounts. We would be able to surge our own oil production and get 100,000 to 200,000 barrels a day,* From coal we could get 200,000 to 300,000 more barrels a day but this would take a major effort which has legal constraints. By cutting demand we could save from 150,000 to 300,000 barrels a day. By changing the speed limit we could get another 100,000 barrels a day and reduce the level further by gasoline tax. That would require drastic action and we would have to take immediate and affirmative action. (Explains summary table of paper.) 5

Dr. Kissinger: What is low-low and high-high (referring to table)?

Mr. DiBonna: The principal factor is weather - that is whether it is cold or hot.

* and also get 100,000 barrels per day from our Elk Hills naval reserve.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/7

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

7

Dr. Kissinger: But what does the phrase low-low mean?

Mr. DiBonna: That means low estimate, low demand.

Secretary Schlesinger: How much could the Iranians increase? Five-and-a-half to eight million?

Mr. DiBonna: Our calculations are for this winter.

Governor Love: Iran could perhaps get 200,000 barrels a day more but they have already kicked it up.

Dr. Kissinger: Do you assume a cutoff to the US or Europe?

Governor Love: If Japan and Europe are thrown into the balance, that gives it a different dimension. We have looked at the effect on import levels. It is not realistic to consider the US alone. We also have to look at the effect of the US emergency surplus. We have limited refinery capacity and that is why we have to import.

Secretary Rush: Do we import?

Dr. Kissinger: If it happens, it will happen next week. We are going to need a plan. It should consider a cutoff in the US and a cutoff to Japan and Europe as well.

Governor Love: To do so, we also have to consider consultations on the hill, putting the President on TV, and the timing of what we do now. We have to be ready.

Dr. Kissinger: We don't want to push the button now and cause a panic. We need to have the program ready for the day when they do it.

Governor Love: Faisal is talking about a cut of five percent a month.

Dr. Kissinger: What about the long term? Suppose the Egyptians are badly defeated. I don't think they will be, but it is not beyond the realm of the possible. We might lose all outlets and get cut off. What if they limit production over the long term and we can't handle it with diplomacy and other pressures?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/8

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

8

Governor Love: We can identify areas to increase supply and limit demand but we would have to make some statutory changes. If it happened now, by Tuesday or Wednesday, I would expect the President to say and do something. ✓

Secretary Clements: I think the prediction of picking up a 100,000 barrels a day in the southwest is questionable. They think they are at capacity now. It is also questionable whether we should count on Elk Hills. It is not a matter of just turning the tap on. We may get there in time but it is not a significant amount. This is a mega problem in which we must measure in millions.

Governor Love: They have two million.

Director Colby: Our estimate on how sharply the oil would be cut has to be related to the Arab position on the ground. If the Israelis move slower, then the Arabs should be equally slower in their reaction.

Secretary Schlesinger: On timing we must weigh the advantage of getting something out on the problem. If it is indicated this will happen, we will want to consider the deterrent impact.

Dr. Kissinger: So far no one has threatened us, but we have no program.

Governor Love: We could announce something quickly.

Secretary Kissinger: I wouldn't provoke it or threaten them. An oil cut-off was not mentioned in any of the conversations I have had in the last three weeks. All I have received are hysterical calls from oil companies. The Saudis have been better than any. We have good commercial relations. Some idiot says we shouldn't have said ^{that} but I don't want to challenge the Arabs to a test of their manhood.

Secretary Rush: When we resupply to Israel at that point we will have a problem.

Secretary Schlesinger: The Saudis don't care about the Syrians. The Egyptians could urge the Saudis to be prudent.

Secretary Clements: It will cause restrictions on the domestic economy.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/9

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

9

Governor Love: We would have to make some shifts and close down some factories.

Secretary Clements: There are no other short-term answers.

Dr. Kissinger: I have no preconceived ideas on this.

Secretary Rush: The industrial aspect bears watching.

Dr. Kissinger: We need a task force to begin today to study this problem. John (to Love) and Bill (to Clements) will you work with State on this.

Secretary Sisco: We can get George Benson and one member of the NSC staff.

Dr. Kissinger: We need concrete programs. We need to pin point this for the President. Here are the two or three major things that you can do. He has got to know what he can do if the oil is cut off. We also need to know what to do with regard to Europe and Japan.

Governor Love: The cut in Europe will be 75 percent and Japan gets 50 percent of its oil from Arab countries.

Secretary Schlesinger: They have sixty days of stocks.

Dr. Kissinger: How much do we have?

Secretary Clements: I don't know.

Dr. Kissinger: Is it sixty days of key things or of everything.

Mr. DiBonna: Europe has sixty days of everything.

Dr. Kissinger: And the U.S.?

Mr. DiBonna: We have a few weeks of total consumption or 200 days of European consumption.

Secretary Rush: There is a great difference between the two.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/110

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

10

Governor Love: In a short time there would be shortages in everything -- perhaps a month.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's have a meeting tomorrow at 9:00 or 11:00 and get a detailed program on the oil cutoff. Would we share with the Europeans?

Mr. DiBonna: It is not clear that they can cut off the US. We are having trouble, for example, following Libyan oil production.

Dr. Kissinger: Would they have to cut off all oil production?

Secretary Schlesinger: That is right, to be effective.

Dr. Kissinger (to Secretary Rush): Can we have another group at State and Defense look at what would be the political impact?

Secretary Schlesinger: If we Americanize El Al the Arabs will note it.

Dr. Kissinger: It would be tough enough to go through this for a worthy cause. We should make approaches all over the world. We will need a working group. (To Scowcroft) Is Sonnenfeldt working?

General Scowcroft: Yes.

Dr. Kissinger: We will get Sonnenfeldt working on this with Stoessel and we will need a DOD representative as well. So when we meet tomorrow we will need two things:

- a technical program on what the President has to do, and secondly,
- a political program on what we face with regard to Western Europe and Japan.

Secretary Sisco: I will try my hand at a Presidential statement.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's see the program first.

Secretary Rush: The world can't live with it.

Dr. Kissinger: Let's not talk about consequences. We don't want to make it happen. We should be low key.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 17 2/11

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

11

Mr. Dibonna: Who should get involved with regard to the legal questions?

Dr. Kissinger: Just tell us what we need to get done.

Secretary Schlesinger: The mood of the House is not very forthcoming. The House is as opposed as the Senate, and it extends from "doves" to "hawks."

Governor Love: There will be a hearing before the Albert Committee. They will open it for 12 months for 160,000 barrels a day, if we can guarantee that will take care of the problem.

Secretary Sisco: I detect the opposite view. Some 203 House members signed the petition. Because of the Israeli aspect, there is a certain ambivalence.

Dr. Kissinger: We don't want to provoke it. If there is a fait accompli, we want to know what to do.

Governor Love: We will have to move on an allocation program.

Dr. Kissinger: Consider that on Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday the Arabs announce a cutoff. What do we do? The President has to know what he would do and announce it. If Europe and Japan are included, we have to know what we can do in concert.

Secretary Clements: I agree, it is a problem both internationally and domestically.

Dr. Kissinger: Yes, we would move with contacts that day or the next day. We need to get a list of what our needs would be and our alternatives if we can't get oil. The question is whether we think it through now or then. Assuming an oil cutoff, John (to Love), I would like you to chart it. Perhaps we can get together later today. We will get together later today.

[Governor Love and Mr. DiBonna left the meeting.]

Dr. Kissinger: Turning to the supply situation let me give you a few minutes on the diplomacy. Obviously, we are not on schedule at this point. The British have refused to sponsor a resolution and the Egyptians

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 17/12

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

12

changed their minds on Friday/at midnight and didn't tell the Russians. The Egyptians decided not to accept a straight ceasefire. They want the Israelis to return to the 1967 borders. That is insane. They made the Russians withdraw their agreement to abstention. With Britain and Russia losing out, we are working to link the ceasefire to a political outcome, without saying specifically what the political outcome will be. It is impossible to get the Israelis to return to its 1967 borders. They certainly will not do it as a result of war, but only as a result of negotiation. ✓

Director Colby: I am convinced of the necessity of buffers.

Dr. Kissinger: We can't argue that now. It took 48 hours in 1967, but you can only do that if one party is totally defeated. What we are trying to do is link a call for a ceasefire and a political statement along the lines of reaffirming Resolution 242 and immediate negotiations. The Egyptians must know that they cannot go back to the 1967 borders. Their operations were not conducted to get back land. They don't have the capability.

Director Colby: Not in the short term.

Admiral Moorer: The problem is attrition over a period of time. It is not done over there in my view.

Secretary Rush: It may take years or months to pull into that thing.

Admiral Moorer: They may have to if the Egyptians press and they take more losses. Their problem is principally one of manpower.

Director Colby: There was land between them in 1967.

Dr. Kissinger: If we try to draw lines, we are going to have trouble. We need something like 1967 which is sufficiently vague so that both sides can claim success. But it should involve withdrawal. If we talk about the precise boundary now, it will mean endless negotiations. I don't exclude a simple ceasefire if the Israelis turn against the Egyptians.

Director Colby: But not within a week.

Dr. Kissinger: I think we will have an outcome this week. Not much longer. The British are routing around and so are the Russians. We can put pressure on the Russians particularly since they have joined the exercise. We

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/13

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

13

can put it to them about attrition and fighting by proxy and where they stand diplomatically. It is essential that we not talk about it.

Secretary Schlesinger: We will have the supplies flowing by this evening. Six C-5s and 22 C-141s.

Dr. Kissinger: Will they be in?

Secretary Schlesinger: They will be in or on the way in. It will be on the order of 1,600 tons of supplies.

Secretary Sisco: How much will be in by tonight?

Secretary Schlesinger: About 15 C-141s and three C-5s.

Admiral Moorer: We can fly in about 50 tons an hour once we get going.

Director Colby: The total Soviet airlift is about 3,000 tons. Jim says we have 1,600 tons on the way already.

Dr. Kissinger: Is that because our planes hold more?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes.

Admiral Moorer: They have very few large planes and we can step it up.

Dr. Kissinger: No, don't step it up. Our interests are not the same. Ideally, Israel would win without exorbitant costs and quickly. But we don't want Israel totally intractable.

Secretary Schlesinger: I don't see how they can be. They have complete dependence on the US and that will be visible.

Admiral Moorer: The fighters should be wheels down.

Secretary Schlesinger: It amounts to ten Phantoms.

Admiral Moorer: They are over in Israel now. I think that will cause a reaction. The Phantom is a symbol to the Arabs. I think we are more likely to have a reaction from that rather than the C-141.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/14

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

14

Secretary Clements: They are going in like clock work, it will make a hell of an impact.

Dr. Kissinger: Also it is a warning to the Russians to worry about, we could pour it in all out. Our problem is the Arab countries.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have got to pour it on. Otherwise it lengthens the time and doesn't reverse their appreciation of the problem. We should strive for a major impact in the shortest period of time.

Director Colby: Should we make it larger?

Secretary Rush: It is a demonstration of real power.

Dr. Kissinger: I substantially agree. Are we doing any chartering?

Secretary Schlesinger: There is a communications unit that will have to go into Israel. I wanted to call that to your attention. Other bystanders will probably notice. They will be speaking English.

Dr. Kissinger: Don't you have any that speak Hebrew. I am kidding, it is not a bad idea.

Secretary Sisco: We should be doing it quietly.

Secretary Rush: How many US citizens are over there now?

Secretary Schlesinger: There is no way to tell.

Secretary Kissinger: I have given the assurance to Dobrynin that there are no US military fighting or being discharged from the service for that purpose. The only people who ought to be getting there are technically civilians. The only exception might be an individual who once served in the military.

Secretary Rush: Are they leaving the service?

Secretary Schlesinger: The only US there are the pilots of the F-4s and transports plus the communications outfit. There will be US voices on the air.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/15

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

15

Dr. Kissinger: We should keep that to a minimum.

Admiral Moorer: They will be coordinating the arrivals.

Dr. Kissinger: Can we keep them on the base?

Admiral Moorer: Yes.

Secretary Schlesinger: We do not have an identity of interests. They may be trying to suck us in. I wouldn't put it past them to take photos of our people.

Dr. Kissinger: Such a thing can't happen by accident.

Secretary Schlesinger: This is the most dramatic airlift since 1948. There is no way to avoid attracting attention.

Admiral Moorer: We are sort of flying in a straight line with a stop at Lajes. The Russians are overflying Turkey, but we are flying a narrow corridor. If the Portuguese flame out we will be left with nothing.

Dr. Kissinger: In the Lebanon situation, weren't we staging from Turkey?

Admiral Moorer: We became more vulnerable when Qadhafi took over.

Director Colby: It will be a dramatic thing. It will be no secret.

Secretary Sisco: We should make an effort to keep it quiet. We have no interest in building this up.

Secretary Schlesinger: When we decide to move we can run the Russians into the ground.

Director Colby: We can say 200 Russian planes landed first.

Dr. Kissinger: We can take the position that they fouled us up on negotiations and brought in airplanes. We had to open up the pipeline ourselves.

Secretary Clements: I don't think a charter would be worth it at this point.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/16

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

16

Secretary Schlesinger: It would mean non-involvement of the US military.

Secretary Clements: But we have lots of airplanes to throw in the breach and get the job done.

Secretary Kissinger: We want support for the airlift. We don't want them to point to the US military. Are we getting C-5As in there?

Secretary Clements: Yes, we are getting C-5As in there. Our problem is we are getting two planes in one.

Admiral Moorer: We can carry it in faster than the Israelis can unload it.

Secretary Clements: The real problem in charters is commercial. They are afraid that helping us will incite terrorist activities and that there will be attacks on their commercial facilities. It is a real problem. And it is a problem for Air Force planes as well.

Dr. Kissinger: If it is commercial, it is more definable and much less well protected. Bill (to Clements), can we get by with Air Force aircraft?

Secretary Clements: We will start today with US putting things in. There eventually will be a reaction. The worse thing would be an Air Force charter.

Secretary Schlesinger: It will depend upon the outcome of the war. If the Arabs are crushed, there will be lots of terrorists.

Dr. Kissinger: The worse outcome would be if the Arabs appear to be impotent. The best outcome would be if the Arabs come to believe that we are the only ones who can solve the problem. It is a test of whether we can really deliver.

Secretary Schlesinger: The Israelis are making continuous progress in Syria.

Dr. Kissinger: It is still going on.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/17

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

17

Admiral Moorer: There is a steady grind.

Director Colby: They may have changed direction.

Secretary Clements: When they do, it will chew up far more people. There are four Egyptian divisions there. It will be a bloody affair if the Egyptians don't run.

Secretary Schlesinger: As I said, there are some tentative signs that the Syrians may be cracking.

Secretary Rush: Would they run into Jordan?

Secretary Sisco: They King won't permit that.

Secretary Rush: Then it may be an organized retreat.

Admiral Moorer: There is no such thing.

Secretary Rush: We can organize one anytime. They may decide to hit Americans. Why charter? Who would pay the indemnity for losses?

Secretary Schlesinger: DOD would have to?

Dr. Kissinger: What about the Israelis?

Secretary Clements: The Israelis can't. The Treasury can't make good either. Only DOD.

Secretary Rush: Isn't it much more costly.

Secretary Clements: Yes, but it is just money.

Secretary Schlesinger: I am glad the Comptroller can't hear that.

Dr. Kissinger: What is really different is the terrorist aspect.

Secretary Schlesinger: I believe we should play this opportunistically. We can pull the US out and organize the civilians later.

Dr. Kissinger: What are the benefits?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/18

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

18

Secretary Schlesinger: They may not realize how well we can do with charters and the Russians may cut off their military airlift.

Dr. Kissinger: If the Russians cut off theirs, would we cut off ours?

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes.

Secretary Sisco: It would be injurious to the Israelis versus the Arabs. The word will get around in the Arab world that it is time for a ceasefire. At such a time we would be well to stop it.

Secretary Schlesinger: I believe it helps diplomatically. We can resupply and hold out replacement as a way to increase our leverage. We can ship in equipment after the ceasefire. Why don't we go this way.

Dr. Kissinger: We would equip only after a ceasefire.

Secretary Schlesinger: That is not much incentive for the Israelis.

Director Colby: Israel has critical shortages.

Dr. Kissinger: When are you going to let me know who is hurt more. I need an assessment today.

Secretary Schlesinger: We can take the military aircraft out of the supply business. We can offer to take MAC out.

Dr. Kissinger: But if we then go back with a civilian airlift of equal size, we will have a massive problem with the Soviets or they may paint Aeroflot on their military planes. I need concrete answers on the question of a ceasefire with a cutoff to both sides. Who has the worst problem? We also have to consider the British and French.

Secretary Schlesinger: One can't make the case.

Secretary Clements: It is a matter of judgment. No one knows.

[Colby and Rush agree.]

Dr. Kissinger: If both sides stopped the airlift, it doesn't stop regular air. With a ceasefire, we could both stop the airlift and not have a cutoff of supplies.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/19

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

19

Admiral Moorer: At Lajes, civilian planes would be a problem. Even with nothing in the planes it gives them problems.

Dr. Kissinger: The strategy now diplomatically is to go for a ceasefire and maneuver to link it loosely to a permanent settlement. For pressure, we will begin a massive supply effort and stop it only with a ceasefire.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have a large potential for resupply although it is expensive to air lift tanks, etc.

Dr. Kissinger: If that is so, we had better say something to Egypt and friendly governments.

Secretary Clements: Do we want to get the civilians out?

Dr. Kissinger: Do they want to bring out 40,000? We do have empty airplanes.

Secretary Schlesinger: If we want to get them out we can set the planes up.

General Scowcroft: We could get a few on each now.

Dr. Kissinger: I wouldn't have any objection . . .

Did anyone tell Keating what is going on? We should also tell the Ambassadors in Arab countries.

General Scowcroft: And we need public affairs guidance.

Dr. Kissinger: You can start telling some Congressional people today. But do it as late as you can. I want to see what the Russians come back with. We can say that we waited until Saturday/afternoon and made a big diplomatic effort. But our peace moves were delayed while the Soviets brought in 200 aircraft. We are prepared to stop the airlift as soon as a ceasefire is achieved.

Secretary Schlesinger: Good.

Dr. Kissinger: And we should give DOD credit.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 17 2/20

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

20

Secretary Schlesinger: We can call it an act of Russian treachery.
don't

Dr. Kissinger: I want to tackle the Russians until as late as possible.
I have had a general talk with Fulbright and he is quite content.

Secretary Clements: We talked to 17 people yesterday and there were
no adverse reactions.

Dr. Kissinger: Should we offer a cutoff of the airlift on ceasefire?

Secretary Clements: Or without ceasefire.

Secretary Schlesinger: You can't offer that. It is your trump card. You
would diminish the impact of what you have done. The threat remains
that the Israelis will sweep all before them. There is no one reason for
the Egyptians to negotiate.

Secretary Clements: We will be able to get a ship there and unloaded
in about three to four weeks.

Dr. Kissinger: If we cut off the airlift for the ceasefire, we can go back
to the normal arrangement. After the ceasefire we can gauge our actions
according to the pace of buildup.

Admiral Moorer: Nothing lifted to Israel last week had an immediate impact.

Dr. Kissinger: If the diplomacy had worked yesterday, we might have
been able to avoid it. But today we are better off. We can now say there
was Russian treachery on negotiations. They have made an abortion of
our peace move and have sent in 200 flights.

Secretary Schlesinger: We had anticipated that! [Laughter]

Admiral Moorer: What we do Wednesday will not change the situation
today. The only real help is being provided by the Soviets. For example,
with their SA-6. We have seen a drop off in the rate that the Egyptians
are throwing missiles up.

Dr. Kissinger: Do we know what the Soviets are bringing in?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/21

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

21

Director Colby: Missiles, we think.

Dr. Kissinger: How about aircraft?

General Scowcroft: Probably about 32.

Admiral Moorer: The Syrians have serious deficiencies in pilots.

Dr. Kissinger: [REDACTED]

Director Colby: [REDACTED]

Dr. Kissinger: I don't want to hear it.

Secretary Schlesinger: Mansfield doesn't want to hear about it.

Dr. Kissinger: Then it is our judgment that we should not go to charter. It looks tricky to shift and the only advantage would be that we could say that we have reduced US military involvement. What is Jack Marsh saying?

Secretary Schlesinger: I don't know precisely.

Secretary Clements: Damn little.

Secretary Schlesinger: He is a low key man. I think he just said we are starting the airlift.

Secretary Rush: Marshall Wright called about it. He is worried that our Congressmen haven't been told anything.

Secretary Sisco: We had better do something.

Dr. Kissinger (to Colby): Have you told your people to let Congress know?

Secretary Clements: I believe we have just told a few in the House and Senate.

Secretary Rush: My information is that the Committee members have been told and there may be a few more.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/22

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

22

Dr. Kissinger: Can we get a list. Can we agree on what we are saying? The Russians have begun a massive airlift and we are responding in kind.

Secretary Sisco: It will get out publicly.

Dr. Kissinger: But not today.

Secretary Rush: The Russians will detect it today and it will get out.

Dr. Kissinger: But we don't have to explain it. I told them we would blame them.

Secretary Schlesinger: And what do we say to the press?

Dr. Kissinger: Just say that the Soviets started it on Wednesday. We waited four days. We made several appeals to them to stop but they have sent in 200 planes. On top of that we had hoped they would cooperate diplomatically and had some expectations in that regard. We are willing to stop the air lift when the ceasefire is achieved and both sides stop.

Did the F-4s go in?

Admiral Moorer: We are the only ones never in trouble.

Dr. Kissinger: I am sorry for you country boys. Did the F-4s go in. We need to put major emphasis on consumables.

Admiral Moorer: Yes, a small number went in. But they were part of the original order.

Dr. Kissinger: Are the F-4s flown by the military?

Admiral Moorer: A combination of civilians and military.

Secretary Sisco: We will be asked if they receive combat pay?

Secretary Schlesinger: Just shift that to DOD.

Ambassador McCloskey: We have a message here ready to go out on the question of press guidance on reconnaissance. We would acknowledge it.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/28

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

23

We would say, yes, we carried out a non-combat effort so that our actions would be guided on the most intelligent basis.

Dr. Kissinger: I hope that guidance was not approved. We should have learned from the U-2 incident that honesty may kill you.

Secretary Rush: [REDACTED]

Secretary Sisco: We should say it is for our government.

Director Colby: We can't just no comment.

Dr. Kissinger: We can say we carry out regular reconnaissance activities on which we do not comment. If the Egyptians raise it, we can say we will investigate.

Secretary Rush: We can't stop it when it is started.

Dr. Kissinger: We can't say we didn't.

Admiral Moorer: In 1970 we announced it.

Dr. Kissinger: That was a different situation. At that time there was a crisis over the missile violations. The Israelis asked us.

Secretary Sisco: But we will have a public problem. The question is whether if we fuzz it up, we can avoid our man being kicked out.

Dr. Kissinger: If we say we did recon over their territory in wartime, he will get kicked out.

Admiral Moorer: They will know just by going on the performance of the aircraft.

Director Colby: We could say no comment.

Secretary Sisco: In 24 hours it will be reported. We could say that we are looking into it but we have SR-71s operating all around the world. We are checking and making a full investigation.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/24

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

24

Admiral Moorer: But tomorrow there will be another question.

Dr. Kissinger: I don't think I get the point about why we admit it.

Secretary Schlesinger: This is a watershed point with regard to US activities.

Dr. Kissinger: As a signal it is OK. Maybe we should have done it.

Director Colby: [REDACTED]

Secretary Schlesinger: The Israelis have made two or three augmented requests. They want three times the number of the TOWs in our inventory. How far are we to go in tearing down the US force structure?

Dr. Kissinger: Our basic strategy is to emphasize consumables. On the heavy stuff, we will stop short of it being a preponderance.

Secretary Clements: The TOW missile could be critical.

Dr. Kissinger: That I would give them.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have already sent a plane load of LAWs.

Dr. Kissinger: How many TOWs can we give?

Secretary Schlesinger: We have given them ten. We only have 140 in our inventory.

Admiral Moorer: We are looking into stepping up production.

Secretary Clements: That is the point.

Dr. Kissinger: Now that we are mounting an airlift, we should . . .

Secretary Clements: They should get what they need and they need TOWs or something comparable.

Dr. Kissinger: If we can replace them fairly quickly, I would give them more. We should increase production.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

OCT 172/25

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

25

Secretary Schlesinger: We have given them 2,000 TOW missiles.

Dr. Kissinger: But how can they provide good coverage without the launchers?

[On this note the lengthy meeting terminated.]

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE